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RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 1596
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RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ASHGABAT 000765

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/16/2018
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [SNAR](#) [KCRM](#) [TX](#)
SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN: ICITAP TRAINING SUCCESSFUL,
DEEPENS FRIENDSHIP WITH MVD OFFICIALS

REF: A. ASHGABAT 0347
[1](#)B. 07 ASHGABAT 1043

Classified By: CDA RICHARD E. HOAGLAND: 1.4 (B), (D)

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY: A June 2-13 Department of Justice International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) course for Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) investigators and forensic experts went very well, with another crop of very motivated and hard-working Turkmen investigators and forensics experts taking part. Discussions held on the fringes of the training -- and at unprecedented socializing events between ICITAP instructors and MVD officials -- also shed light on some of the inner workings of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Although not entirely forthcoming, these MVD officials gave the ICITAP instructors a tour of the forensics laboratory where scientists use U.S.-donated equipment to analyze samples of unknown material as well as a Russian automated fingerprint identification system. There is a long way to go before the ICITAP-MVD relationship is completely open, but this visit showed progress. An ongoing problem of procurement of expendable supplies necessary to operate the U.S.-donated equipment must also be raised at higher MVD levels if it is to be resolved. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Department of Justice International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) instructors Robert Bianchi and Jonathan Pelletier conducted an Advanced Crime Scene Processing course for 30 MVD investigators and forensic experts on June 2-13. The course included topics such as DNA collection from crime scenes and suspects, fingerprint-lifting techniques on difficult surfaces, forensic applications of Photoshop software, use and application of the camera in crime scene photography, and practical exercises on equipment. Bianchi and Pelletier said that participants in this course, like others, were enthusiastic and eager to learn.

SHORTAGE OF EXPENDABLES LIMITS USE OF EQUIPMENT AT LAB

13. (SBU) On May 11, Bianchi and Pelletier met with Acting Director of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) Criminal Research Laboratory Murad Cherkezov, Criminal Research Center Senior Chemist Bezirgen Oralmuradov, and MVD International Relations Department Officer Shamurad Seryayev. Cherkezov said that he was not aiming to be named permanent director because he likes his role as deputy, and added that he is not afraid of the responsibility but is accustomed to the deputy position. Bianchi emphasized the importance of using the equipment on a regular basis, and Cherkezov mentioned that the laboratory still faces problems obtaining expendables necessary for operating the equipment, such as methanol, chloroform, hydrogen, and helium. Because of this continuous issue, the scientists review only some samples of unknown materials and drug samples on the equipment. Cherkezov also asked when and how often maintenance on the equipment should be performed. Bianchi said that U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency Senior Forensic Chemist Brian Geer left a schedule during his last visit in the fall of 2007, and Bianchi said that he would look for another copy.

ICITAP OFFERS TO LOOK FOR ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT

14. (SBU) Bianchi offered to look into acquiring additional equipment for the lab which can sometimes appear at a very low cost, but added that he would need to know precisely what the lab needs. Cherkezov said that, while ICITAP puts a

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priority on developing capacity for drug analysis in the lab, the lab would like to strengthen its capacity in working with ballistics. Lab personnel would also find a comparison microscope useful, as well as instructional materials on leading investigations. Cherkezov claimed not to feel threatened by the emergence of the new State Counternarcotics Service (SCS) (Ref. A). He said that the State Counternarcotics Service does not change anything within the MVD, adding that the organizations work together, and that his lab hopes to assist the Service with research in the future.

RUSSIAN FINGERPRINT IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM FULLY INSTALLED

15. (SBU) Cherkezov showed and demonstrated for Bianchi and Pelletier the newly installed automated fingerprint identification system produced in Russia by Papillon Systems. Seven examiners will review fingerprint evidence from all five provinces until the MVD identifies funds to give the provinces their own systems. The MVD is also willing to share fingerprint data with other countries if asked. While Cherkezov also showed Bianchi and Pelletier one of the lab's mobile criminal investigation vans, he said that the MVD rarely uses it since Turkmenistan does not have many serious crimes. The MVD does not yet have a Cybercrimes Unit.

WHY THE FORMER LAB DIRECTOR WAS FIRED: FORGOT HIS PLACE WITH THE NEW MINISTER

16. (C) ICITAP courses also serve as a source of information that Post would not have heard otherwise -- in this case, the story about the firing of the last Criminal Research Center chief, a position which has a history of high turnover. One student from Dashoguz told one of the course interpreters that the previous Criminal Research Center director (Ref. B) was fired because, while the director had a personal friendship with the previous minister, with whom he could speak freely, he forgot that he could not carry on in the same manner with the new minister.

UNPRECEDENTED SOCIAL INTERACTION WITH THE MVD OFFICERS

17. (C) The MVD has typically taken part in training and accepted equipment gratefully, but officials have always

refused invitations from ICITAP instructors for socializing in the evenings. Post always understood that the officers could be punished if they took part in such activity. This time, Cherkezov and Oralmuradov pleasantly surprised Bianchi and Pelletier with an invitation to dinner on June 7. Bianchi and Pelletier said that Cherkezov and Oralmuradov asked many questions about how the United States organizes its law enforcement bodies and fights crime. Cherkezov and Oralmuradov accepted Bianchi and Pelletier's reciprocal dinner invitation for dinner on June 12 as well. During the dinner, Oralmuradov shed some light on the MVD's problems in finding expendables such as hydrogen that are needed to run the equipment. He said that lab personnel collect money among themselves and purchase the gas privately. They have cultivated a friendship with the director of a gas factory in Balkan province, who has agreed to sell the gas to the Center at a reduced price.

18. (SBU) COMMENT: The progress demonstrated in ICITAP's relationship with MVD demonstrates the importance in Turkmenistan of maintaining close, frequent personal contacts. While the ICITAP-MVD relationship is beginning to be more open, Post believes that there may still be limits to how open Cherkezov can be. For example, Cherkezov, knowing

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that the laboratory director's office has a revolving door, may have been hedging somewhat in stating that he does not want to become the director. Bianchi also feels that Cherkezov's comments about the difficulty in acquiring the chemicals and gases needed to use the U.S.-donated equipment is an excuse to cover a lack of prioritization on the lab's part that needs to be worked out somehow. It will be necessary to raise this issue at a higher level, however, since these mid-level managers don't have the necessary pull to fix supply-chain problems. END COMMENT.
HOAGLAND